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Cobra Jiboia (Boa Constrictor)

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Myself
Logan, Utah, USA
October 2018

Cobra Jiboia (Boa Constrictor)
Brazilian Folk Belief

Informant:

My name is Gianna Patchett. I am from Las Vegas, Nevada and am currently a Sophomore at Utah State University double majoring in Music (Cello Performance) and English. I am the third of six children.

I am a member of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints and returned from a mission to the Brazil Manaus Mission in February 2018. My mission covered the Brazilian states of Amazonas, Roraima, Rondonia, and Acre. These states cover a large portion of the Amazon Rainforest. Because of my mission, I am fluent in the Portuguese language. I have dark curly hair, brown eyes and olive skin (I have strong Italian heritage) so a lot of people mistook me for a native Brazilian.

Context:

I heard this story at lunch with some of the members of the Church. It was told by an older man (whose name I don't remember...maybe Paulo or Pedro...) in the house of his son-in-law's grandmother. The house was very humble and made of wood slats but the lunch was always a feast. The grandmother has a parrot that can mimic exactly a person's condescending laugh. It would laugh at us awesome. The older man (Paulo or Pedro) was very knowledgeable about the jungle and the plants and animals in the forest and had lots of stories to tell about weird things in the jungle. He told it to me as a true story and as a reason not to walk into the jungle without a guide.

This is one of my favorite stories to tell my friends when they ask about the Amazon Rainforest.

Text:

I heard a story about a snake that can control people with its stare. When it is looking at you, you walk in circles until you get tired and sit, at which point the snake eats you. If you notice that you are walking in circles, you have to break the snake's concentration somehow, such as by taking your shirt off and putting it back on inside out or shooting a gun.

Texture:

I tell this story as a way to creep people out a little about the Amazon. I don't think I believe it but I certainly think it is interesting and it reminds me of the snake in the Jungle Book. That parallel makes me think it has to be grounded in something.

I tell it excitedly and usually motion taking off a shirt or shooting a gun when I say the ways to break the snake's concentration.

Gianna Patchett
Utah State University
Introduction to Folklore/English 2210

Dr. Lynne S. McNeill
Fall 2018